



# Valley Air News

A publication of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District

May 2000



## ARB Calls for a New Burn Allocation Program

*The Valley Air District will soon begin implementing a new burn allocation program.*

In an effort to serve agribusiness, public land managers, and residents better, the California Air Resources Board (ARB) revised regulations to the agricultural and prescribed burn program in March. The new program requires the establishment of a daily acreage burn allocation based on local conditions. This program would be similar to one that has been used successfully in the Sacramento Valley for more than ten years.

District Meteorologist Evan Shipp explained that under the current program, permitted burning is either wholly allowed or completely prohibited within a region. When burning is prohibited for a series of days, it results in a backlog. On the next permissible burn day, many permit holders rush to clear agricultural by-products or brush that cannot be disposed otherwise, creating a considerable amount of smoke at once.

Under a burn allocation program, we could have more permissible burn days. What will change is the amount of acreage that can be burned per area. Assessing prevailing weather, wind speed, air pollution, and other variable conditions, the Valley Air District and the ARB will determine how much burning can take place in specific areas without a significant impact to air quality and residents.

"This burn allocation system gives us more discretion and flexibility based on regional factors," Shipp said. "It also eliminates the smoke impact created by many burns on a few days by providing for smaller, incremental burning," he explained.

While the benefits of the new burn allocation system are evident, many of the operational details have yet to be developed. Future issues of *Valley Air News* will provide information on the program as they are finalized.

## Central California Ozone Study—coming this summer

As a result of progressively more stringent controls on reactive organic gases and oxides of



nitrogen emissions, the frequency and intensity of excessive ozone concentrations in central and northern California have been reduced despite rapid increases in populations, commercial activities, and vehicular traffic. However, more progress needs to be made to reduce emissions further.

The San Joaquin Valley is a complex region from an air quality perspective, due to its proximity to the Pacific Ocean, a diversity of climates, and the varying terrain. The Central California Ozone Study (CCOS) will kick-off on June 1 to examine these factors. The study will assess air quality and meteorological field measurements, emissions characterization, data analysis, and air quality monitoring.

*Ozone Study continued on page 2*

## GOVERNING BOARD REVIEW

### The Governing Board took the following action during the April 20th Governing Board Meeting:

- Adopted a proclamation to declare the month of May as "Clean Air Month."
- Received, filed and authorized the dissemination of the *1999 Annual Report on Implementation of District's Integrated Air Toxics Program* to county boards of supervisors, city councils, and local health officers.
- Received and filed the *2000 Ozone Rate of Progress Report*.
- Received and filed amendments to *Rule 4002 (National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants)*. Set May 18, 2000 for the Public Hearing to consider the proposed amendments
- Appointed one (1) member to the REMOVE Program Evaluation Committee
- Approved and authorized Chair to execute agreement with Pinnacle CNG Company in the amount of \$50,000 to be applied towards the construction of a compressed natural gas fueling station at United Parcel Service in Fresno.
- Approved resolution committing to the timely delivery of the proposed Heavy-Duty Low Emission Vehicle CMAQ project.



**The next Governing Board meeting will be held on Thursday, May 18, at 9:00 a.m. in the District's Central office in Fresno, and via video-teleconference in the Modesto and Bakersfield offices.**

### *Ozone Study continued from page 1*

The goals of the CCOS are to:

- Assess the relative contributions of ozone generated from emission in one basin when days exceed the air quality health standards in neighboring air basins.
- Obtain suitable air quality and emission data to update and improve model applications. These will represent urban and regional-scale ozone episodes in central and northern California.
- Assess the reliability associated with air quality model inputs and formulation, and reconcile model results with observation-based and other data analysis methods.

The CCOS goals are to be met through a process that includes the analysis of existing data; execution of a large-scale field study; analysis of the data collected from the field study; and the development, evaluation and the application of an air quality simulation model for northern and central California.

A technical committee comprising of staff from the Air Resources Board, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, additional air pollution control agencies and sponsoring organizations will direct CCOS with technical input from a consortium of university researchers in California and the Desert Research Institute.

The CCOS will be conducted in the summer of 2000. Future issues of *Valley Air News* will keep you informed on the findings of this major study.

### Clean Air Day— Try Transit Day May 17th in Bakersfield



Several Kern County based organizations have joined together as *Blue Sky Partners* to celebrate.

**Try Transit Day!**  
Wednesday, May 17, 2000

**is a Free Ride Day!**  
with Kern Regional Transit

**and a 25¢ Ride Day!**  
with Golden Empire Transit  
and GET-A-Lift

*Sponsored by Kern Regional Transit, Golden Empire Transit, Happy Bus, Clean Air Week, American Lung Association, Project Clean Air, and the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District.*

### **Just Ride! on May 20th**

In honor of Bike Commute Week, May 15-19, the Valley Air District is cosponsoring, **Just Ride!**, a bike ride and exhibition event at Fig Garden Village in Fresno on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>.



Registration for the free bike ride begins at 9:00 AM and the event is from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

A variety of activities planned include a children's bike safety course, a bike inspection and several informational booths.

*For additional information, please call Janis Parker, Education Specialist, (559) 230-5852.*

## Reclassification to Affect Major Sources

As a result of the Valley's failure to meet the Federal Ambient Air Quality Standard for ozone last November, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is expected to reclassify the Valley Air District from serious to severe non-attainment for the one-hour ozone standard. Commonly called a bump-up, this will trigger a number of new and more restrictive mandates under the Federal Clean Air Act. One of these changes is a lower emission threshold for what is defined as a major source of oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions.



Currently, to be considered a major source, a facility must have the potential to emit 50 tons per year or more of NOx or VOC emissions. With the bump-up, the threshold will be lowered to 25 tons per year.

The District has identified 900 additional, potential sources that have permitted emissions above the new thresholds. Since all major sources are subject to Title V permitting requirements, these facilities may be required to apply for operating permits and undergo comprehensive review by the public and oversight agencies.

Upon reclassification, the District will adopt regulations necessary to implement the new mandates by a target date of February, 2001. Affected sources will then have one year to apply for Title V permits.

The first step in determining Title V applicability is to calculate the potential emissions from a facility. If these exceed the new thresholds, the source is subject to Title V requirements. There are two manners in which a facility can avoid additional Title V permitting requirements: by proving that the actual emissions are less than 50 percent of the thresholds, or by revising its permits so that the lower allowable emissions remain below the new thresholds.

Federal regulations require that sources determine their own Title V applicability and request these permits in a timely fashion. The District will offer technical assistance throughout the entire process to help facilities that may be affected by the changes. This process will begin well in advance of the Title V application deadline when the District provides written notices and instructions to sources that may be affected.

Please check the Valley Air District's website, [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org), in the coming months for further information.



## The Big Clean Air Pay-Off— June 6th!

This year, the Valley Air District once again invites all Spare the Air Employer Partners to promote their businesses and services by becoming involved in **The Big Clean Air Pay-Off—Take Two!** The promotion is part of the activities planned for Drill Day, the official kick-off to the Spare the Air program, Tuesday, June 6, 2000. For the second year the Big Clean Air Pay-Off promises to be an exciting and educational day for all San Joaquin Valley residents.



To participate, businesses must offer promotional incentives and discounts for the public or their own employees who

avoid or postpone pollution-causing activities on Drill Day or during that week. The most innovative air pollution reduction program will be featured newspaper ad promoting the event and listing all of the participants.

For more information, please call Brandy Ramos Nikaido, Education Specialist at (559) 230-5851.